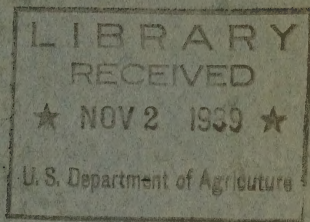


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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Security Administration



Handbook
Care and Operation of FSA Motor Vehicles

Driver's Handbook

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Security Administration
Office of the Administrator
Washington

September 22, 1939

My dear Fellow-workers:

The story is told about a candidate for office in a mid-western state whose opponent for that same office was a man strongly suspected of various corrupt practices. Throughout his speaking campaign the candidate, instead of making any charges or even once referring to his opponent's rather shady record, related again and again a story that his opponent had, while traveling on a railroad dining car, paid sixty cents for a baked potato. At every place he spoke, his only reference to his opponent was that he had once paid sixty cents for a baked potato. Much to the surprise of his friends, he won the election by an overwhelming vote. The voting public, which would have most likely found it difficult to understand the intricate details of any supposedly shady transactions, concluded that it would not want in office a man who had no more sense than to pay sixty cents for a potato, when potatoes were selling for only a few cents a bushel.

In a similar way, the public as a whole may not understand in detail what the FSA is doing for the farmer. It may not understand all the figures and statistics that we have had published showing the number of farmers whom we have aided, and the intricate workings of the FSA that result in relief to the farmer, but a motor vehicle with an FSA insignia driven along the highway is something real and different, something tangible. If the driver of that vehicle is discourteous or if he is a "road-hog", a definitely unfavorable impression may be formed about our organization, just as the voters in the story above formed an impression about the man who paid a high price for a baked potato. I cannot emphasize too strongly the point that drivers of FSA motor vehicles have an unlimited opportunity to make

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friends or enemies of members of the public by the manner in which they drive along the highways of the country.

As to safety and caution, I do not think it sufficient merely to say that a Government driver should exercise the same caution that he would exercise while he is driving his own car. A Government driver, being a public servant and driving a car purchased with the taxpayers' money, should exercise the highest degree of caution and safety at all times. Some people may take unnecessary chances and abuse their own automobiles; that is their responsibility solely. To drive a car belonging to the U. S. Government in a reckless, abusive, or discourteous manner, involves to some extent the whole Government organization and, in particular, works to the discredit of the Government agency for which the driver is working.

This Handbook, "Care and Operation of FSA Motor Vehicles", has been prepared as a guide for all operators of FSA automobiles, trucks, and any other kind of automotive equipment. Compliance with the spirit of these instructions will go a long way toward making friends of the people with whom we deal and upon whose sympathetic cooperation we must often rely.

Sincerely yours,

Will M. Alexander

Administrator

CARE AND OPERATION OF FSA MOTOR VEHICLES

OPERATING PERMITS

I Each motor vehicle operator must possess a motor vehicle operator's permit as required by the state or locality in which the vehicle is to be operated.

II Each motor vehicle operator must have issued to him, in addition to the state or local operator's permit, a Department of Agriculture motor vehicle operator's permit, Form AD-103. This permit, as well as the state or local permit, must always be carried when driving.

III In addition to the above requirements, no employee may operate an FSA motor vehicle without proper authorization from the official in charge.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR APPEARANCE AND MAINTENANCE OF VEHICLES

I Motor vehicle operators will have the following duties as to the appearance and maintenance of the vehicles:

A Keep the vehicle as clean and presentable in appearance as possible. This may be done while waiting for passengers, or at other idle times, such as when in a garage or filling station.

B Observe the operation of the vehicle and determine that it is properly lubricated at all times.

C See that the radiator is filled with water.

D Check the oil at frequent intervals on long trips.

E Observe all mechanical irregularities and report them to the official in charge as soon as possible.

F Observe the condition of brakes and lights, and report any defective condition as soon as possible.

DISTRIBUTION: Operators of FSA motor vehicles.

Business Services
Property and Services
Custody

I (cont.)

G See that windshield wiper, horn, and steering devices are in good working order, checking their operation at frequent intervals.

H Keep the top, tarpaulin, tailgate, and doors properly secured and in place when using trucks.

I See that trucks are equipped with flares, flags, fire extinguishers, first-aid kits; and that all vehicles are equipped with chains.

II Don'ts:

A Don't tamper with the ignition or carburetor adjustment, or other working parts normally requiring the attention of an experienced mechanic; report any defective operations to the official in charge.

B Don't overload the vehicle at any time.

OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

I **Preparations for Use of Vehicle:** Before using a vehicle, the motor vehicle operator will observe the following:

A See that the vehicle is sufficiently filled with gasoline, oil, and water.

B Check all tires, including the spare tire, to see that they are properly inflated.

C Check all lights, including headlights, tail-lights and stop lights, and courtesy lights on trucks, for focus and clearness.

D See that shift lever is in neutral, the spark retarded, brakes set, and that the clutch pedal is depressed before turning on ignition key and starting motor.

E Use the hand-operated choke moderately when starting the motor.

I (cont.)

F Avoid racing the motor in the "warming up" process.

G Check all brakes, before starting on a trip, to see that they are properly adjusted.

II **Don'ts:** Don't run the motor in a closed garage, as the monoxide gas from the exhaust fumes is deadly poison.

III **Driving:** In driving, motor vehicle operators will at all times observe the following:

A Keep to the right side of the road when driving, except when safety conditions permit passing another vehicle.

B In passing another vehicle, either standing or moving, sound horn, give any necessary hand-signal and drive with caution, taking care that the road is clear for at least two hundred feet ahead and that no other vehicle is about to pass from the rear.

C Yield right-of-way to fire apparatus, police cars, and ambulances by pulling over to the right side of the road or street, coming to a full stop and remaining stopped until the road is clear.

D Obey all traffic signals and local traffic regulations. (Driving a Government vehicle does not exempt the operator from prosecution.)

E Before starting to back up, always look closely to see that the road is clear, giving the proper hand-signal.

F Keep a safe distance behind other vehicles on the road so that an emergency stop may be made at any time without endangering other vehicles or pedestrians. This is especially necessary if the roadway is slippery from rain, snow or ice.

G When approaching a vehicle coming from the opposite direction at night, depress or lower the headlight beams.

III (cont.)

H Stop at all stop signs. This means STOP, not just slowing down.

I Anticipate the presence of stray domestic animals on rural highways and drive with care. In short, animals on the highway are to be given the right-of-way.

IV **Don'ts:**

A Don't start or stop suddenly without cause.

B Don't "ride the clutch".

C Don't pass other vehicles on a curve or on a hill.

D Don't pass a procession without permission and without a hand-signal.

E Don't pass other vehicles within an intersection.

F Don't drive at rapid speed near schools or places where children may be playing.

G Don't drive at rapid speed near cross-roads or road intersections, or at railroad crossings.

H Don't take any passengers unless authorized to do so.

I Don't permit spinning or slipping of wheels in deep sand or mud.

J Don't "bulldog" a vehicle when it is mired or stuck.

V **Stopping:** In stopping, motor vehicle operators will at all times observe the following:

A Indicate intentions by giving hand-signals.

B Come to a stop gradually, if at all possible, rather than by sudden application of brakes.

V (cont.)

C When stopping on grades for any length of time, have the wheels blocked and brakes set

D In case of breakdown of vehicle, or if for any reason the vehicle is forced to park on the highway, pull over to the right side of the road (off the pavement if possible), shut off the ignition, set the emergency brake, and see that oncoming vehicles are not endangered in any manner.

E If it is necessary to leave a truck on the road, place red flags three hundred feet in front and in rear of vehicle. Flares should be used at night.

VI **Don'ts:**

A Don't stop where main or cross-roads, or private driveways will be blocked.

B Don't stop at any place where the vehicle is likely to sink or mire (as in mud or deep sand).

C Don't leave the vehicle except when it is necessary or authorized.

D Don't leave the vehicle in gear.

E Don't leave the vehicle with ignition switch on or with motor running.

F Don't leave the vehicle with lights on while parked unless it is necessary.

G Don't leave vehicle unlocked or leave keys in vehicle when it is parked. (If damage or theft results from an employee's negligence, the employee will be required to reimburse the Government for the loss sustained.)

(See paragraph giving chart which shows the relative stopping distances under most favorable conditions.)

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

I Operators of motor vehicles will observe the following:

- A Develop skill in control of the automobile or truck.
- B Avoid taking foolish chances.
- C Always give hand-signals where they could reasonably be expected.
- D Be courteous to others always; road courtesy is a great preventive of accidents.
- E Make full allowance for the mistakes or recklessness of others.
- F See that the vehicle is equipped with chains when their use would be advantageous for all or any portion of the trip.
- G Give due consideration to weather and conditions of the highway in regulating speed of vehicle.
- H Avoid overloading vehicles at any time.
- I Take every precaution possible for safety of passengers.
- J In descending steep grades use lower speed gears to assist brakes.
- K Keep alert always; be on the lookout for vehicles or pedestrians who may unexpectedly get in your line of travel.
- L Block vehicle when loading if there is a possibility of the vehicle moving.

II Don'ts:

- A Don't speed; most accidents are caused by speeding.
- B Don't permit passengers to ride on the running-board, to stand up in a truck, or to jump from a moving vehicle.

II (cont.)

C Don't use stoves or similar inflammable heating devices in trucks used for the transportation of workers

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

I **To the Government:** Employees operating motor vehicles are responsible to the Government for observance of its rules governing the operation and maintenance of motor vehicles. Violations will be treated with appropriate disciplinary action.

II **To the Public:** Each motor vehicle operator is responsible for observance of all local driving rules and regulations and is subject to prosecution for any violation of such rules and regulations. Each motor vehicle operator is financially responsible to any person or persons injured by the motor vehicle which he is driving when such injury is attributed to his negligence. In addition, he is responsible for the damage to any private automobile or other private property resulting from his negligence in the operation of a motor vehicle. In a number of states, under the so-called "Financial Responsibility Laws", a driver may have his state permit revoked for failure to satisfy a judgment against him.

ACCIDENTS

I In case of accident or collision, motor vehicle operators and other FSA employees concerned will observe, insofar as possible, the following regulations:

A Render immediately all possible aid to any injured persons.

B Without delay, remove from the highway all obstructions caused by the accident which may endanger other travelers.

C Fill in Standard Form No. 26, "Driver's Report - Accident", ON THE SPOT so far as possible; make note of all evidence relating to the accident, such as measurements as to the position of the cars on the highway, skid marks, wheel tracks,

I C (cont.)

and so forth; obtain the names and addresses of all witnesses and, if possible, a written statement by each eye witness to the accident. Copies of Standard Form No. 26, Driver's Report, will be carried by all FSA drivers.

D Report the accident and deliver this Driver's Report promptly to the immediate superior official.

E A complete investigation of the accident will be made as soon thereafter as is practicable by an investigating officer, who will be appointed for the purpose by the highest ranking administrative officer in the vicinity of the accident. The investigating officer will properly fill in Standard Form No. 27, "Investigating Officer's Report - Accident", and supplement it with a detailed and unbiased written report of all facts and circumstances in connection with the accident or collision.

II FSA employees shall not, under any circumstances:

A Encourage a private party involved in an accident to present a claim against the Government or assist in the prosecution of a claim once filed. The aggrieved party may be informed as to his rights in this respect, but should not be encouraged to file a claim.

B Promise or indicate that any form of settlement will be made.

C Endeavor or promise to compromise a claim for damages arising out of an accident or collision.

D Threaten officially or personally abuse the private party or parties involved.

E Fail to submit without protest to any reasonable investigation conducted by the private party or officers of the law relating to the accident or collision.

II (cont.)

F Address letters to members of Congress or other public officials relating to such claims without prior administrative approval.

III The important thing to remember in case of accident or collision that results in damage or personal injury to any one, including the Government, is to get the facts surrounding the occurrence. The question as to who is at fault will be determined by higher officials.

PURCHASE OF GASOLINE, OIL, AND REPAIR SERVICES

I To obtain gasoline, oil, services, and repairs, motor vehicle operators will follow instructions given by the supervisor or by the official having custody of the vehicle. In all cases, an account of the items purchased, showing the trade name, quantity, and unit prices of items should be maintained.

TRANSPORTING EXPLOSIVES

I Any motor vehicle operator having occasion to transport explosives will familiarize himself with the Federal, state and local laws for handling explosives and comply with them.

II He will not smoke while on or near the truck, nor carry matches, firearms or loaded cartridges.

III He will stop the motor when gasoline is being put into the tank.

IV No person other than the driver and his helper will be permitted to ride on trucks transporting explosives.

V It is advisable to avoid unnecessary stops. Sudden starting, stopping, and jarring is dangerous and should be avoided. When stops are made, the trucks should be well away from traffic and parked vehicles.

VI Signs "Danger, high explosives", or similar warnings will be put in conspicuous places on the trucks.

VII Trucks containing explosives will not be taken into garages or repair shops.

VIII It is safer to transport explosives in daylight, but if transportation at night is necessary and lights other than truck lights are needed, electric flashlights or electric lanterns will be used.

CHART FOR ESTIMATING DISTANCES REQUIRED FOR STOPPING

I The following chart shows the estimated distances required for stopping a vehicle under the most favorable road conditions. It is based on the use of effective four-wheel brakes and driving on a straight, level, smooth, hard-surfaced, dry highway:

Speed of Vehicle		A	B	C.
Miles per Hour	Feet per Second	Reaction Time Distance (ft.)	Braking Distance (ft.)	Total Stopping Distance (ft.)
10	15	11	7	18
15	22	16	15	31
20	30	22	28	50
25	37	27	43	70
30	44	33	62	95
35	51	38	84	122
40	59	44	110	154
45	66	49	139	188
50	73	55	172	227
55	81	60	208	268
60	88	66	248	314

(Table taken from "The Driver" - American Automobile Assoc.)

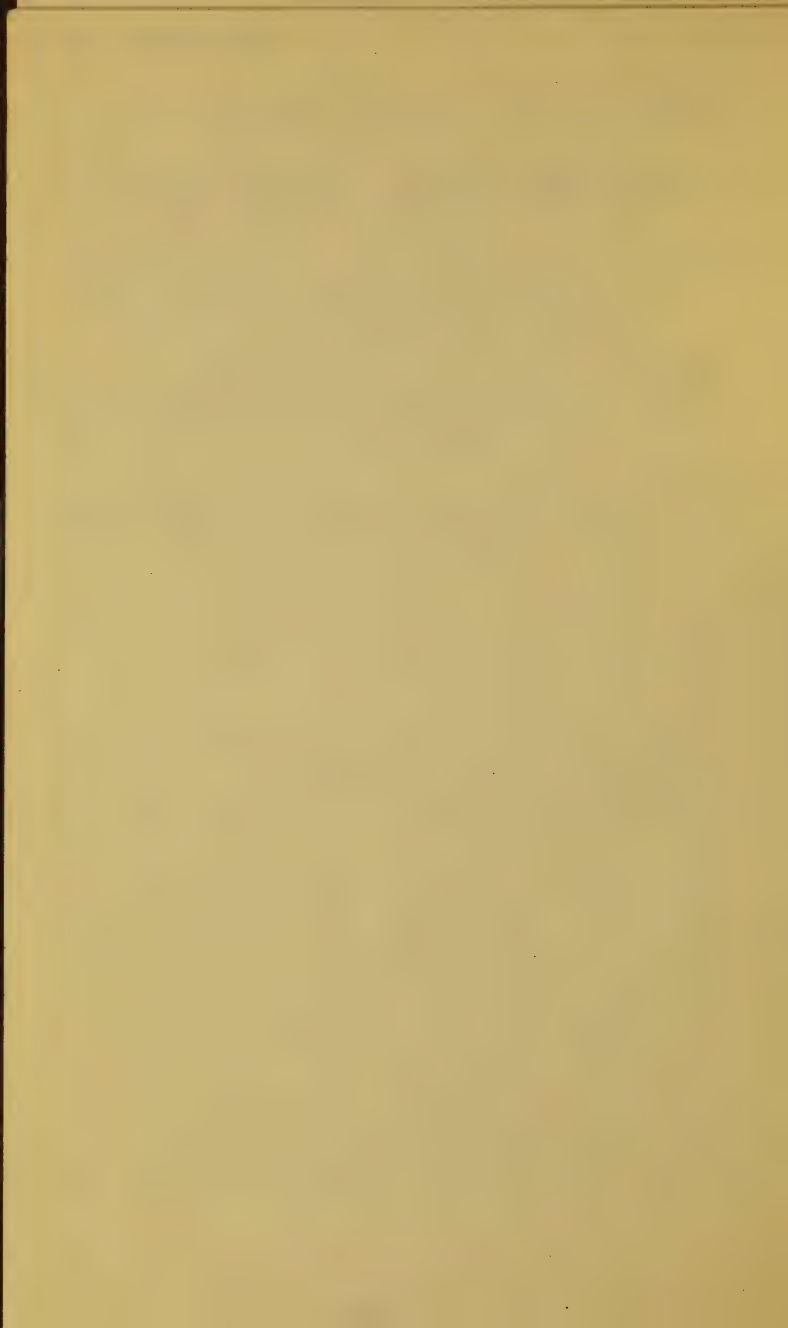
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NOTE: Using a 0.75 second average reaction time:

Column A. Shows the distance, in feet, you will go before your mind and body react to a warning of danger.

Column B. Shows how much farther you will go from the time your brakes first begin to take effect until you come to a full stop.

Column C. Shows the distance, in feet, you will travel from the time you are first aware of danger until you come to a full stop.



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